# Meadow Pathways Wellbeing and Education Cornwall (MPWEC)

# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

# Education other than at School (EOTAS)

*Responsibility to update:* Zoe Waitz and Michelle Pascoe
*Applies to:* All staff, contractors, volunteers and visiting professionals working with children and young people (CYP) engaged in Meadow Pathways EOTAS packages (including tuition in homes, community venues and online).

Version No: 3
Date: September 2026
Review Date: September 2027

## Summary of Changes – September 2026 Review

This policy has been reviewed and updated in September 2026 to reflect Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 (in force from 1 September 2026) and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 (in force from 18 March 2026). Key changes made at this review:

- All references updated from KCSIE 2025 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 to the September 2026 and March 2026 editions.
- Added a short section reflecting new DfE guidance on gender-questioning children: parental involvement in requests relating to social transition is the norm, with any exception referred to the DSL.
- Strengthened wording on recognising, challenging and addressing racism and other discriminatory behaviour as a safeguarding matter, not only an equality matter.
- Section 6 (formerly "Safeguarding, EDI and KCSIE 2025") updated to KCSIE 2026 and expanded to reference the DfE's voluntary national standards for non-school alternative provision.
- **Version 3 (September 2026):** reporting route aligned with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (concerns go to Meadow Pathways' DSL, who informs the commissioning school); clarified that the Public Sector Equality Duty applies to public bodies and that Meadow Pathways has regard to it; accessibility of online sessions added; typing errors corrected.

This summary is provided for ease of reference; the changes are reflected throughout the policy below.

## 1. Policy Statement

Meadow Pathways Wellbeing & Education Cornwall is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our work with children, young people, families, schools, and partner agencies. We provide bespoke, trauma-informed EOTAS and alternative provision that actively removes barriers to participation, learning, wellbeing and safety.

We uphold the principles of the Equality Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998, the SEND Code of Practice (2015), and the statutory safeguarding duties set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026.

We recognise that children accessing EOTAS may face additional vulnerabilities, and we work proactively to ensure their rights, dignity and identity are protected.

## 2. Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026, including safeguarding responsibilities for children in alternative provision; online safety and content risks (including misinformation and harmful content); and responsibilities for children placed with external providers

The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to public bodies, including the schools and local authorities that commission our services. As a private provider, Meadow Pathways has regard to it and supports our commissioners to meet it.

Meadow Pathways recognises that equality and safeguarding are inseparable: discrimination, exclusion, or prejudice can constitute safeguarding concerns.

## 3. Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We commit to:

- Providing a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for all children and young people
- Ensuring no child is disadvantaged because of a protected characteristic
- Actively challenging discrimination, prejudice, harassment or victimisation
- Ensuring our therapeutic and educational approaches are culturally sensitive and identity-affirming
- Ensuring accessibility for children with SEND, SEMH needs, trauma histories, or complex vulnerabilities
- Working in partnership with families, schools and agencies to remove barriers to engagement
- Ensuring staff training reflects current safeguarding and equality expectations

Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

## 4. EDI in Practice for EOTAS and Alternative Provision

### 4.1 Individualised Provision

We tailor provision to each child's needs, identity and lived experience, including:

- Trauma-informed practice
- Neurodiversity-affirming approaches
- Cultural and linguistic sensitivity
- Adaptations for sensory, emotional or physical needs
- Flexible delivery environments (home, community, outdoor spaces and online)

### 4.2 Removing Barriers

We ensure:

- Accessible communication
- Adjustments to session structure, pace and environment
- Consideration of cultural, religious and family contexts
- Respect for pronouns, names and identity
- Safe spaces for children to express concerns or experiences of discrimination
- Online sessions are accessible, for example by allowing cameras off, using captions or chat, and adjusting session length

### 4.3 Anti-Discriminatory Practice

We challenge:

- Racism, including Islamophobia and antisemitism
- Ableism
- Sexism and misogyny
- Homophobia, biphobia and transphobia
- Religious intolerance
- Stereotyping or assumptions about identity
- Prejudice-based bullying or harassment

Any such concerns are treated as safeguarding issues and reported to Meadow Pathways' Designated Safeguarding Lead, who informs the commissioning school's DSL or the placing local authority.

**Gender-questioning children:** where a child or parent/carer raises a question about gender identity or requests support with social transition, Meadow Pathways follows current DfE guidance – parents/carers are involved wherever it is safe to do so and their views are given great weight, with any exception (where involvement would place the child at greater risk) referred to the DSL. Meadow Pathways does not itself initiate any such action.

## 5. Responsibilities

### 5.1 Meadow Pathways Staff

All staff must:

- Model inclusive, respectful behaviour
- Complete safeguarding and equality training
- Report discrimination or prejudice-based incidents
- Ensure sessions are accessible and inclusive
- Maintain awareness of cultural, social and identity-based factors affecting engagement

### 5.2 Leadership Responsibilities

The Directors (Zoe Waitz and Michelle Pascoe) ensure:

- Policies are up to date and compliant
- Training is current and relevant
- Provision is monitored for equity and accessibility
- Concerns are escalated appropriately
- EDI considerations inform risk assessments, planning and review

### 5.3 Children and Families

Children and families are encouraged to:

- Share information that helps us understand identity, needs and barriers
- Raise concerns about discrimination or exclusion
- Participate in reviews and planning

## 6. Safeguarding, EDI and KCSIE 2026

KCSIE 2026 emphasises:

- The Local Authority and schools remain responsible for safeguarding pupils placed in alternative provision
- Providers must understand equality and human rights implications in safeguarding practice
- Online safety risks now include misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy content

Meadow Pathways also has regard to the DfE's voluntary national standards for non-school alternative provision, as we take referrals from local authorities, schools and parents directly.

Meadow Pathways ensures:

- All safeguarding concerns are reported immediately to Meadow Pathways' DSL, who shares them with the commissioning school's DSL or local authority
- Identity-based harm is recognised as a safeguarding issue
- Children's voices are central to decision-making
- Records are kept securely and shared appropriately

## 7. Accessibility and Reasonable Adjustments

We provide reasonable adjustments for:

- Communication needs
- Sensory needs
- Physical access
- Emotional regulation
- Trauma-related triggers
- Neurodivergent profiles

Adjustments are reviewed regularly with the school and family.

## 8. Monitoring and Review

We monitor:

- Engagement and attendance
- Accessibility of provision
- Feedback from children, families and schools
- Any incidents of discrimination or prejudice
- Outcomes for children with protected characteristics

This policy is reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or guidance changes.

## 9. Complaints and Concerns

Concerns relating to equality, discrimination or inclusion can be raised with:

Michelle Pascoe, DSL & Director – Michelle.Pascoe@meadowpathwayscornwall.com

All concerns are taken seriously and responded to promptly. If you are unhappy with our response, please use our Complaints Policy.